

For Immediate Release: April 1, 2011

Contact: Maria Reppas, (202) 225-6631 / (202) 527-0149 maria.reppas@mail.house.gov

*Over \$660 million of U.S. Taxpayer Dollars Have Funded an Ineffective and Unnecessary Program*

**Washington, DC** –Today, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) introduced the Stop Wasting Taxpayer Money On Cuba Broadcasting Act (H.R. 1317) to end U.S. taxpayer funding for Radio and Television Martí. Originally established in the 1980s, Radio and Television Martí broadcast news in Spanish from Florida to Cuba.

"I am working to identify smart cuts that reduce the federal deficit by eliminating ineffective, outdated, and unnecessary programs," said Congresswoman McCollum. "This legislation would save U.S. taxpayers \$300 million over the coming decade by ending wasteful broadcasting programs to Cuba known as Radio and TV Martí."

Independent surveys of the program found that up to 99 percent of Cubans never hear or see these broadcasts because the Cuban government blocks the signal, and the information that does get through is largely ignored by the Cuban people. Despite the program's ineffectiveness, U.S. taxpayers have spent more than \$660 million on Radio and Television Martí over the past 20 years.

"The Cold War is over, and Cuba is not a threat to the United States. It is time for the United States to open trade and travel with Cuba, not waste precious federal dollars beaming questionable content at Havana.

"This legislation is an obvious, no-regrets step to reduce the federal deficit. It is an alternative to the approach taken by House Republicans, who are slashing critical funds for homeless veterans, women's health, transportation, education and dozens other vital community resources," concluded Congresswoman McCollum. "Every serious fiscal conservative in Congress should support this bill."

A companion bill to H.R. 1317 has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR).

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.

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